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MESSING ON MESSING AROUND {page 08}

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Tuesday, May 8, 2012

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GETTY IMAGES

- Hamels suspended five games by MLB for plunking Nationals' teenage star Harper
- New rivalry brewing as Nats' GM calls Cole 'fake tough,' 'gutless'

{page 24}

WHO YOU CALLING 'FAKE TOUGH?'

News

Blame game in duck boat tragedy case

- Parents of two Hungarians killed watch children's final moments
- Civil case begins against boat operators

{page 02}

How to really write about sex

New John Irving novel makes '50 Shades of Grey' seem like a children's book

{pages 10-11}

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Duck boat crash victim gave 'her life to save his'

Hungarian girl killed during Delaware River tragedy gave life vest to Ride the Ducks mate, lawyer claims ◐ Family of two Hungarians see video of final moments in court ◐ They seek damages from two boat companies

▶ Schwendtner

POOL VIDEO

▶ This image shows deckhand Burkhardt moments before he jumped ship.

Hungarian exchange student Dora Schwendtner, 16, killed in 2010 when a tugboat-towed barge capsized a duck boat in the Delaware River, spent the last moments of her life saving an employee whose company stands accused of contributing to her death, according to a video shown in federal court yesterday as the families of Schwendtner and fellow victim Szabolcs Prem, 20, watched stoically.

"They can see this barge coming at them and realize there's no escape," lawyer Robert Mongeluzzi said of the Ride the Ducks boat employees in the moments before they were slammed by the empty ship pushed by K-Sea Operating Partnership. "(Deckhand) Kyle Burkhardt jumps into the water, saving his own life. Only one person cares about someone other than themselves."

The clip shows a shadowy figure tossing a flotation device down from the sinking vessel. "Right there is 16-year-old Dora," Mongeluzzi said. "She throws a life preserver to Burkhardt, saving his life. She gives up her life to save his."

That and several other details came out yesterday in the families' quest to keep Ride the Ducks and K-Sea from capping the amount of financial liability owed to the value of their vessels. The families' attorneys argued an 1800s maritime law does not apply because both companies were long aware of procedural oversights that contributed to the crash.

"These two children are dead because of failures of the defendants regarding issues they knew about," Mongeluzzi said. Those included a lack of employee training, widespread cell phone use and a failure to follow emergency procedures on both vessels, lawyers claimed.

Attorneys said Ride the Ducks Capt. Gary Fox never told passengers to don life vests and called the company's office for help rather than emergency services when he cut power to the smoking sightseeing ship, leaving it idling in a busy channel.

But the company's representatives admitted no responsibility, saying the boat was stopped in a permitted area, Fox had no reason to believe the passengers were in imminent danger and that tugboat First Mate Matthew Devlin was pushing the 250-foot barge "deaf and dumb."

ALEX WIGGLESWORTH
awigglesworth@metro.us

Everyone playing the blame game

Attorneys for K-Sea also shifted much of the blame to Devlin — currently jailed for his role in the incident — who was informed shortly before the crash of complications during an operation performed on his son.

Lawyers said Devlin moved to the tug's lower pilothouse where visibility was poor, turned down the radio volume, made numerous phone calls and even performed an Internet search on his son's condition.

"This isn't about K-Sea's policies and procedures at all because Devlin was not thinking about policies and procedures," attorney Wayne Meehan said. "K-Sea management could not have been aware that Devlin would lose his faculties to proceed upriver."

METRO/AW

What happened on the K-Sea tug

"The most important information from today was the deckhand of the tug testifying that he didn't know he was supposed to make rounds and check on Devlin every hour," Mongeluzzi said outside the courthouse.

Deckhand Luis Fernandez said he was told to make safety checks "every few hours," despite a rule in K-Sea's policy handbook that they be completed each hour. The duck boat involved in the fatal crash launched around 1 p.m., meaning Fernandez should have been making his second round of checks before or during the 2:37 p.m. accident.

Instead, he was sitting in the boat's galley with engineer Pablo Battista, who was also supposed to be on watch. Fernandez only stirred when he heard the engine slow. METRO/AW

In the news

Medical malpractice cases still down

Pennsylvania Chief Justice Ronald Castille announced yesterday a leveling-off in the volume of medical malpractice case filings in the state following a six-year decline. Though the total number of lawsuits filed in 2011 slightly increased, numbers still show a 44 percent decline from the statistical base years of 2000 through 2002.

In the news

No LOVE lost

An art buyer filed suit against "LOVE" sculptor Robert Indiana claiming his actions rendered worthless investments Tovar made in works he thought the pop artist created. The buyer claims he purchased versions of the "LOVE" statue stating "PREM" – "love" in Hindi – worth $1.5 million. But Indiana has claimed they aren't his works.

BYOB on ballot in Ocean City

NEW JERSEY. Residents in Ocean City will vote on a ballot question today that would allow diners to bring their own bottles to some restaurants in the historically "dry" town.

The issue has divided residents and restaurant owners, who see the measure as a way to boost business. If approved, BYOB service would take effect immediately. It would not apply to boardwalk eateries.

METRO/SDL

Former FBI agent testifies in abuse case

PHILADELPHIA. A former FBI agent hired by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to investigate sexual abuse claims against priests testified yesterday that Rev. James Brennan gave conflicting accounts of what happened with the alleged victim.

Brennan is accused of attempting to rape the boy, who was 14 at the time, at his West Chester home. METRO/SDL

Rutgers, Rowan merger hits wall

NEW JERSEY. Rutgers University's Board of Trustees passed a resolution last week stating that the Camden campus should remain part of the Rutgers university system, which could stymie Gov. Chris Christie's plan to merge Rutgers-Camden with Rowan University.

Despite Christie's stated intention to sign an executive order forcing the merger, the plan required the approval of the Rutgers board.

METRO/JW

Sabina trial nears an end

- Psychologist testifies that suspect Johnson has intelligence of 11-year-old
- Girlfriend told court that he smoked, drank heavily before his confession

Tragic fate

Earlier in the day, Marie Elise Rodriguez, O'Donnell's best friend, testified that it was her bike O'Donnell was riding when she was attacked.

"Normally she slept over, but I had a huge pile of clothes on my bed, so I slept on the couch," a tearful Rodriguez testified.

73

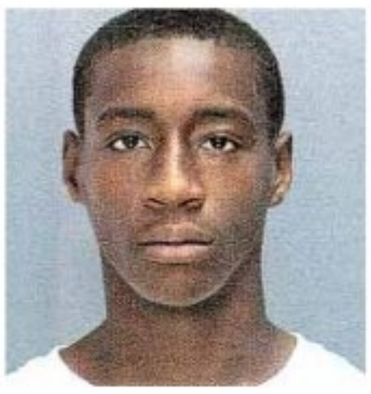
Johnson's IQ, according to testimony of a clinical psychologist, who also said the suspect functions at the cognitive level of an 11-year-old

Donte Johnson's sworn statement to homicide detectives two weeks after the murder of Sabina Rose O'Donnell in June 2010 portrays a callous, young thug, but defense attorneys called two witnesses yesterday who testified that Johnson's statement should not be believed.

Johnson, 20, is charged with first-degree murder, rape and robbery of O'Donnell, 21, who was found naked in a lot outside her apartment near Fourth and Girard. If convicted of first-degree, he will automatically be sentenced to life.

Dominique Abel, Johnson's girlfriend for nearly three years, testified that she saw Johnson drink approximately eight "supersize" cups of brown liquor and smoke marijuana just before he surrendered to police.

"He was intoxicated," she



said. "His eyes were bloodshot red, he was stumbling walking. He was just out of it."

Johnson's mother and her boyfriend, George Jones, told Common Pleas Court Judge Glenn Bronson a similar account last week during a defense motion to get Johnson's statement dismissed, but Bronson allowed the statement.

When cross-examined by Assistant District Attorney Richard Sax about whether she discouraged Johnson from drinking or smoking before turning himself in, Abel said, "He's an adult, he's supposed to control his life."

The defense also played videotaped testimony from Dr. Gerald Cooke, a clinical and forensic psychologist, who was hired to perform a battery of tests on Johnson earlier this year. Cooke said Johnson had an IQ bordering on mental retardation and functioned at the cognitive level of an 11- or 12-year-old. He also diagnosed him with brain damage, but said he could not "offer an opinion about what caused the brain damage."

Both sides are expected to give closing arguments today.

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RICARD LARMA/METRO

▶ O'Donnell, seen here weeks before her murder, was killed in 2010.

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Unusual summer fundraising ahead for city orchestra

Group needs some $3M-$4M for exiting bankruptcy later this year • It isn't only orchestra cutting costs

RICARD LARMA/METRO

So many cellos, so many financial issues.

Not unfamiliar with the importance of fundraising, the organization behind Philadelphia's heralded orchestra is holding a rather unique money-raising mission this summer: to collect enough money to get out of bankruptcy.

In July, the orchestra will try to raise $3 million to $4 million needed to pay creditors and exit bankruptcy under a reorganization plan, the orchestra's attorney Lawrence G. McMichael said.

Orchestras across the country, including the seven biggest, have been cutting costs to balance the quality of their programs with what the local communities can pay for, said Judith Kurnick, spokeswoman for the League of American Orchestras.

$2.5M

Annual rent the orchestra paid to the Kimmel Center, the concert hall where the symphony plays. The orchestra, which has been paying reduced rent since filing bankruptcy and has negotiated a new lease

"If the community can't support a certain financial commitment, it's unfortunate but it's a reality they have to face," Kurnick said last week.

Philadelphia is the only major U.S. symphony to file bankruptcy. While under court protection from creditors, orchestra managers cut about $6 million in annual costs, partly by canceling pensions and renegotiating the lease on its main performance space, McMichael said.

"The idea is to reach a business equilibrium," McMichael said in a telephone interview yesterday.

McMichael said he has never heard of a company raising money to exit bankruptcy through a charity fundraiser. Since the orchestra wasn't the first nonprofit to file for bankruptcy, it probably isn't the first to use a fundraiser to get out of bankruptcy, McMichael said.

The orchestra's effort isn't much different from what happens when a for-profit company in bankruptcy seeks new investors. BLOOMBERG

Finding its way out of debt

Later this month the orchestra will file its plan of reorganization, which details how the symphony will pay its current debts and keep operating in the years to come, he said. In July, the orchestra will ask federal bankruptcy Judge Eric L. Frank, who is overseeing the case, to approve the plan.

- Once the plan is approved, the orchestra will be able to raise the exit money, mostly from its more than 70 board members, McMichael said.
- **"We will need to pay out $3 million to $4 million. Obviously, we are hoping to be closer to three."** MCMICHAEL

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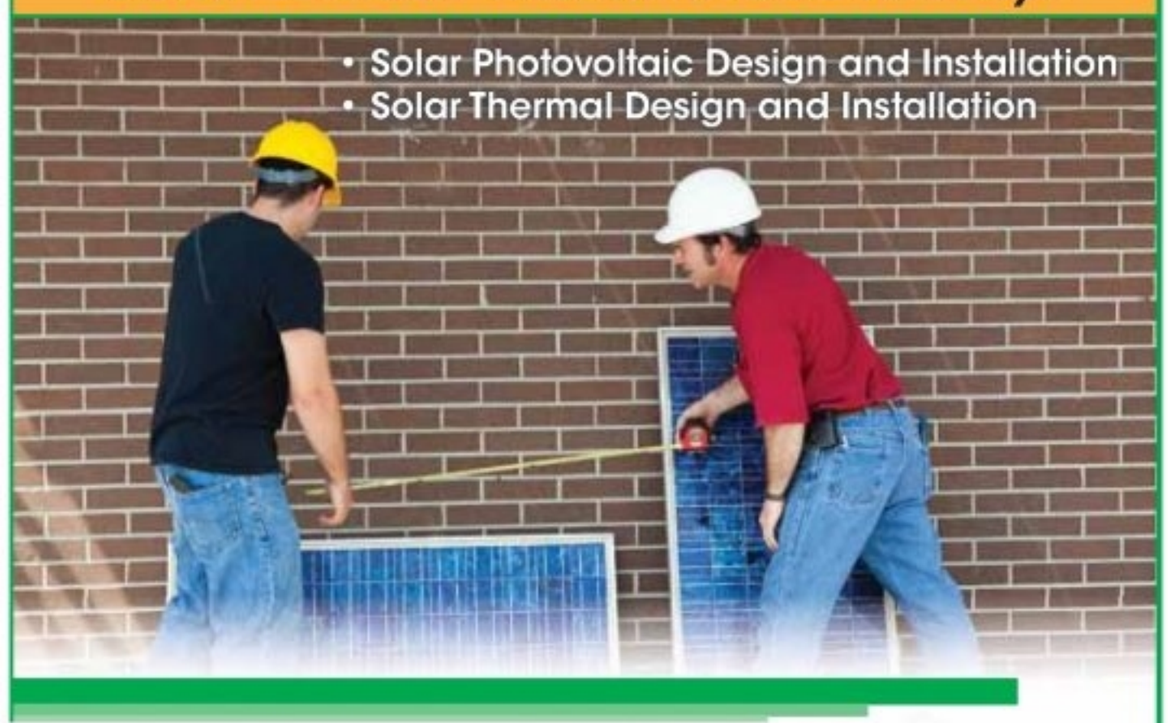

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Markets take Euro upheaval in their stride

World markets took political upheaval in Europe in stride yesterday, a day after voters in Greece and France delivered strong mandates against austerity measures, with the euro recovering from sharp losses and local equity markets up.

The results of the weekend elections in the two European countries heightened the uncertainty of the path ahead for the euro zone debt crisis. But most European stock markets rose, with the noted exception of Greece, and U.S. stocks were also mostly higher, while the euro weakened only slightly.

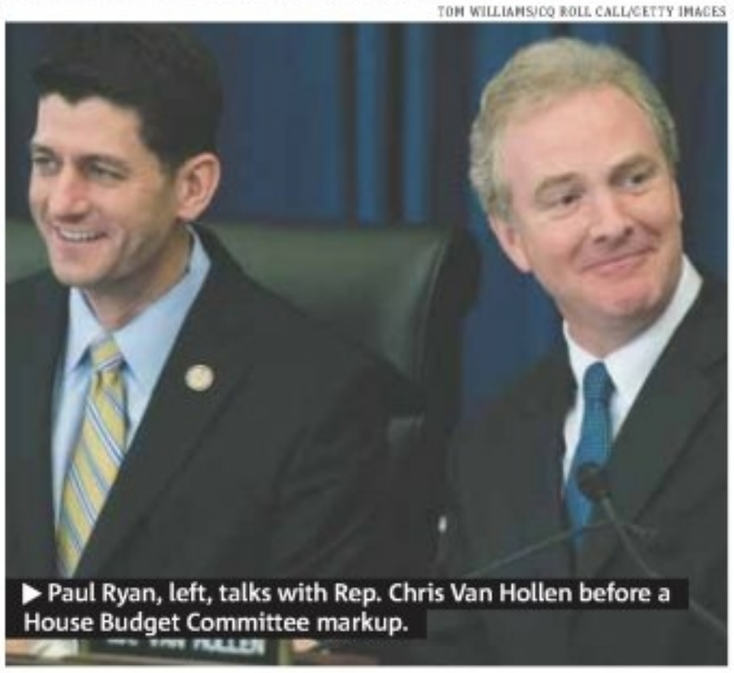
Britain, not part of the euro zone but Europe's biggest financial market, was closed for a public holiday.

A world equity gauge, however, fell to a three-month low in part because of a sell-off in Asia overnight as markets caught up with sharp declines in Europe and New York last Friday. Crude oil prices fell as the uncertainty in Europe unnerved investors concerned about global growth.

The euro pared most of its steep losses against the U.S. dollar but was still trading near a three-week low at $1.3053. A close at that level would be the lowest since mid March.

Brent crude futures touched lows near $110, the lowest since January, but settled down just 2 cents at $113.28. U.S. crude futures hit a session low of $95.34 per barrel, the lowest so far this year, and were last trading down 0.5 percent at $98 per barrel, a three-month low. **REUTERS**

TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL/GETTY IMAGES



▶ Paul Ryan, left, talks with Rep. Chris Van Hollen before a House Budget Committee markup.

Budget knife sharpened

Republicans in the House of Representatives yesterday fired their first shots of the next deficit-reduction battle, advancing legislation to cut nearly $380 billion largely from social programs.

- The cuts to food stamps, child tax credits and Medicaid health care for the poor, among others, are certain to stall in the Democratic-controlled Senate.
- But they stake out Republicans' negotiating stance on replacing $1.2 trillion in automatic, across-the-board spending cuts that are due to take effect in January. **REUTERS**

News in brief

Zuckerberg at NYC Facebook IPO event

NEW YORK. Facebook Inc. CEO Mark Zuckerberg fielded questions about the No. 1 social network's slowing revenue growth and its $1 billion purchase of Instagram as he kicked off a cross-country roadshow to promote the company's $10 billion initial public offering.

Wearing his trademark "hoodie" sweatshirt, jeans and sneakers, the 27-year-old chief executive said he would do the Instagram deal again if he had to, according to people who attended the event.

The world's largest social network aims to raise about $10.6 billion. **REUTERS**

Angry Birds set for IPO as profits jump

HELSINKI. Angry Birds maker Rovio Entertainment said sales jumped tenfold to $100 million last year as gamers flocked to download its titles, adding business was now strong enough for a stock market listing.

The Finnish startup making Angry Birds games — in which players use a slingshot to attack pigs who steal the birds' eggs — has been valued by analysts at up to $9 billion, just short of that of struggling world No.2 phonemaker Nokia.

Rovio said yesterday its finances were good enough for a listing after revealing a highly profitable 2011 in its first public disclosure of business results. **REUTERS**

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Austerity is dead; long live austerity

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During a week in which the austerity policies of the Euro Zone were dealt clear electoral repudiations, Republicans have moved forward with plans to impose their own brand of austerity here in the United States.

France, Greece and Germany saw pro-austerity leaders lose elections this weekend following months of economic misery fed by the spreading contagion of anti-spending policy. In two years, these cuts only yielded more pain, taking money from the pockets of workers and thus deepening recessions.

That fever has caught here in the States, too, at least among the right wing, but has been largely held at bay by the Democrat president. (We say "largely" because Obama did bow to Republican pressure to cut public sector payrolls and limit stimulus packaging, thus, Keynesian economists say, prolonging the current recession.)

Now House Republicans are proposing to cut hundreds of billions in food aid, health care and other social services mainly aimed at the poor as a means of sidestepping the consequences of their failure to deal. This proposal represents an abandonment of last year's unsuccessful deficit-reduction deal, in which the parties attempted to force themselves into cooperation by creating the super committee. That plan came with a built-in incentive to reach a deal: Sequestration, mandated cuts in the absence of compromise that neither party could stomach. In this case, Republicans are attempting to undo their half of the bad deal, $1.2 trillion in Pentagon cuts over the next decade.

Of course, it's all a game. Obama won't sign whatever awful bill the GOP produces, and they know it. Yet it's interesting to see the extent to which Republicans are willing to double- and quadruple-down on austerity. They must believe this to be a winning battle in November. For what it's worth, Europeans thought otherwise, but then, they lived through the disasterous consequences. Whether we must do the same has yet to be determined.

TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL

▶ "Hey girl, you don't really need to feed your kids this week, do you?" (What we imagine Paul Ryan saying.)

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Just the headlines:

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- "Media silent when administration targets sources" **MIAMIHERALD.COM**
- "Romney's Business Schtick Probably Not Much of a Winner" **MOTHER JONES**
- "New Frontiers in Neo-Swiftboating: Obama Was Ready to Blame the Troops!" **SLATE.COM**
- "Obama To Spend $25 Million On Ads In May" **TPM**
- "Crushing Regulatory Burden? You Don't See it in Biz Investment" **JAREDBERNSTEINBLOG.COM**

He said, we said

"Barack Obama will say and do anything ... to help him get elected."

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REINCE PRIEBUS YESTERDAY ON THE JOE BIDEN GAY MARRIAGE GAFFE FROM SUNDAY. WE THINK MR. OBAMA IS DOING HIMSELF A DISSERVICE BY CONTINUING THE FACADE OF NOT COMING OUT IN FAVOR OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY; A MAJORITY NOW SUPPORT EQUAL RIGHTS IN THIS AREA. AS FOR MR. PRIEBUS: THE GENTLEMAN DOTH PROJECT TOO MUCH. HERE HE ATTACKS OBAMA ON HIS STRENGTHS BY ACCUSING HIM OF ONE OF THE MOST LASTING WEAKNESSES OF HIS RIVAL, MITT ROMNEY.

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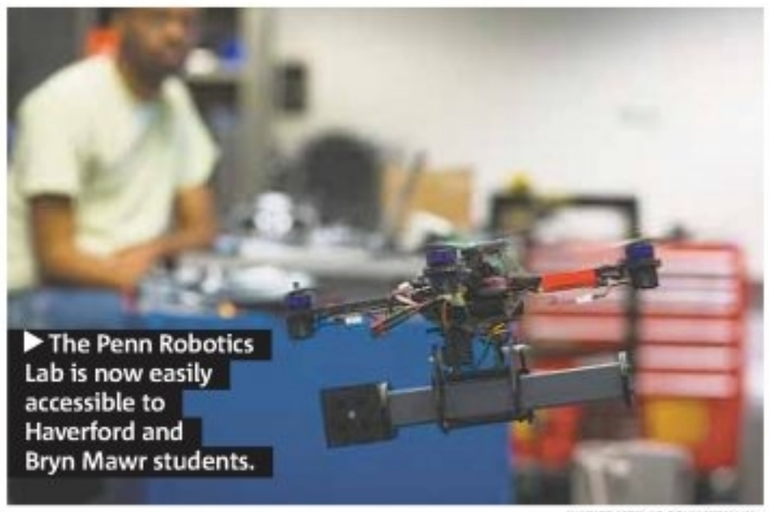
Haverford, Bryn Mawr and Penn engineer a new master's degree

Students at Haverford College and Bryn Mawr College will now be able to enroll in the innovative Four Plus One program with the University of Pennsylvania. The program enables students to get Penn master's degrees in engineering with only one additional year of study after completing their bachelor's degrees.

Qualified students who have strong academic records and appropriate backgrounds can apply for early admissions at Penn's School of Engineering and Applied Science. During their junior or senior year, they will be able to take classes at Penn while finishing their four-year degrees at their home institutions. The three schools, along with Swarthmore College, are already partners in the Quaker Consortium. Under this agreement, students may take classes for their undergraduate degree at a partner school without paying additional tuition.

"Many liberal arts colleges currently have three-plus-two programs in conjunction with engineering schools," said Rob Scarrow, professor of chemistry and director of Haverford's Koshland Integrated Natural Sciences Center. "But many students lose interest in three-plus-two programs when they realize that they will miss their senior year at their undergraduate institution. I am pleased that we have been able to design and offer this four-plus-one program with Penn which makes it possible for students to spend a full four years in residence at Haverford."

JUDY WEIGHTMAN
judy.weightman@metro.us



▶ The Penn Robotics Lab is now easily accessible to Haverford and Bryn Mawr students.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Summer at Penn

College students aren't the only ones learning at Penn Engineering — the school offers several summer programs for middle- and high-school students, including the following:

▶ **Girls in Engineering Math and Science (GEMS) Camp** is a weeklong program for girls entering seventh, eighth and ninth grades. Participants work on projects in areas such as animation, bioengineering and nanotechology

▶ **Summer BOOT UP! Camp** offers two one-week sessions for high-school students with excellent math skills who are interested in computers.

These free camps give admissions priority to boys and girls from traditionally underrepresented groups.

Education in brief

Gwynedd-Mercy College receives $100,000 grant

The Hearst Foundation has added $100,000 to a previously established fund that provides scholarships for Latino nursing students at Gwynedd-Mercy College. Hispanic nurses are underrepresented in the medical profession. This lack means that Hispanic patients may not get the care they need in the face of culture and language barriers.

Gwynedd-Mercy's Hispanic enrollment has increased 150 percent since 2007, so the additional funds are most welcome. The Hearst Foundation established the endowed fund in 1997 and has donated a total of $200,000. The funds will enable the college to give more or larger scholarships to qualified students.

Staff changes at Drexel

Frank Linnehan will serve as interim dean of LeBow College of Business at Drexel University.

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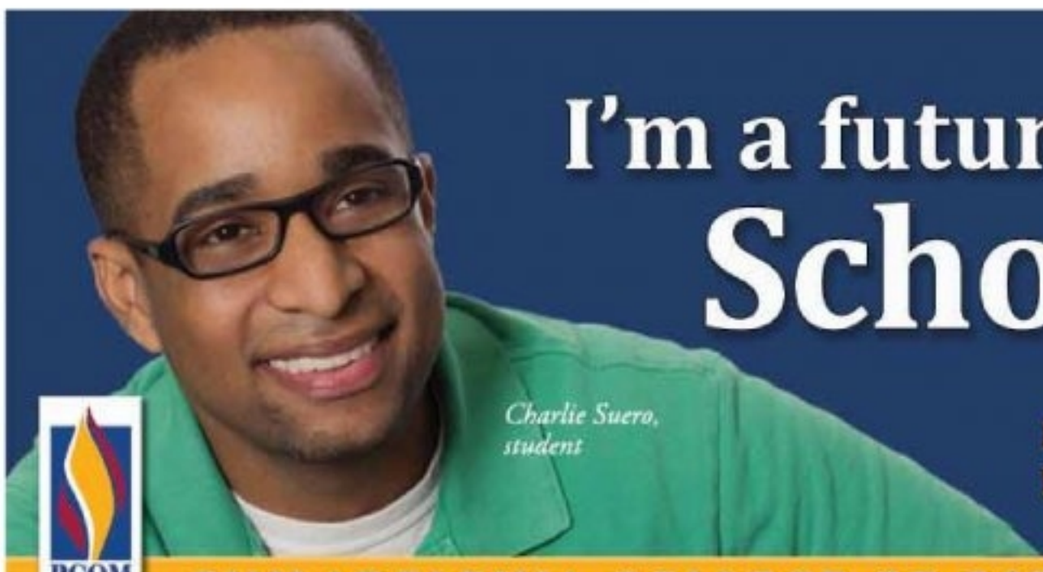

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THE WORD

Metro's **Monica Weymouth** shares her take on the world of gossip @monicaatmetro monica.weymouth@metro.us

The feed ...

▶ Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.

@AlbertBrooks
Breaking News: Romney will choose The Avengers as his running mate.

@SteveMartinToGo
I shot an arrow into the air, where it landed, I know not...gulp.

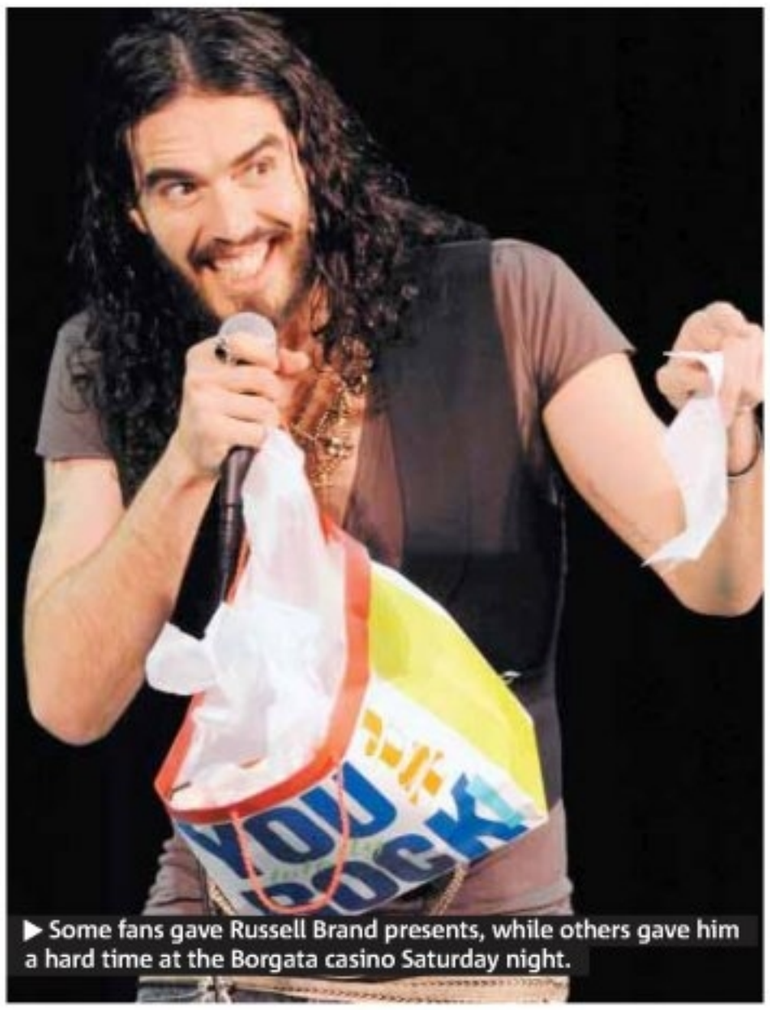
@SethMacFarlane
Okay Hindus, trim it down to about 5 gods and I swear I'll learn their names.

@jimmykimmel
Is anyone else obsessed with charging handheld devices or is it just me?

Heckle Brand at your own risk

Russell Brand was likely expecting some heckling at his stand-up show Saturday night. It was, after all, Cinco de Mayo in Atlantic City, where tequila is always on the breakfast menu. But when one audience member wouldn't stop shouting "**Katy Perry**," the comedian left the stage to defend his ex-wife's honor — or, more accurately, summon the powers of his British accent to methodically, expertly shame a drunk Jersey guy. "Let's see how your mental illness looks in the daylight," Brand said, requesting that the house lights be turned on. After asking the audience to out the heckler, Brand wasn't pleased with what he discovered: "You look like something that's fallen off the side of a church. And what is it that you have rattling around in your mind? Some bizarre combination of alcohol and idiocy. Some cocktail of nothing."

Excuse us — "cocktail of nothing"? That, Russell, would be a Red Bull and vodka, the patron drink of obnoxious Americans everywhere. Show a little respect.



▶ Some fans gave Russell Brand presents, while others gave him a hard time at the Borgata casino Saturday night.

GETTY IMAGES

Debra Messing: Till death is a long time

Debra Messing's marriage to **Daniel Zelman** lasted 20 years, and she thinks that should get at least partial credit in 2012. "I think the institution of marriage is a noble thing. I think the idea of a partner for life is incredibly romantic," the actress tells Ladies Home Journal. "But now we're living to 100. A hundred years ago people were dying at age 37. Till death do us part was a much different deal."

We see your typhoid fever, 1912 newlyweds, and we raise you one drunk night on Facebook.

Jack Osbourne on fatherhood

New dad **Jack Osbourne** had some sweet words on fatherhood for Hello! magazine. "The moment I saw her I felt more love than I'd ever felt for anything. It was the weirdest, most overwhelming thing," said Osbourne of 2-week-old **Pearl**, his daughter with fiancee **Lisa Stelly**.

Cute stuff. But we can't help but focus on grandmom **Sharon Osbourne**, who managed to land herself in the center of the cover and get to hold the baby. Good luck with that one, Lisa.

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Hats on at the Kentucky Derby

1: Big hat, bigger bottle of champagne: **Mary J. Blige** did it up right Saturday in Louisville, Kentucky.

2: Cyndi Lauper, please see our girl **Mary J.** about how to make this look good.

3: Miranda Lambert, we're not sure if we're buying this tiny excuse for a Kentucky Derby hat.

4: Actors **Sharni Vinson** and **Kellan Lutz** were looking especially dapper.

.

5: CoCo wore enough of a hat for herself and **Ice-T** on Saturday.

6: Kate Flannery of "The Office" kept it retro classy in polka dots and pearls.

7: Grey Goose girl **Debra Messing's** derby hat was inspired by the brand's Cherry Noir Vodka. We're afraid to ask what her friends were drinking.

1,2: JOEY FOLEY/WIREIMAGE
3,4,5,6: MICHAEL LOCCISANO/GETTY IMAGES
7: THEO WARGO/WIREIMAGE

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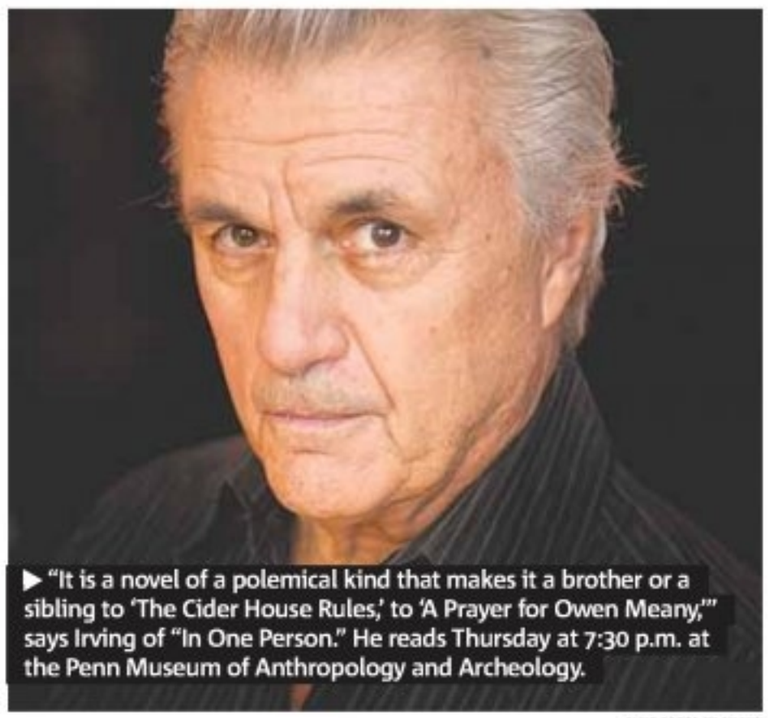
'Person' of interest



▶ "It is a novel of a polemical kind that makes it a brother or a sibling to 'The Cider House Rules,' to 'A Prayer for Owen Meany,'" says Irving of "In One Person." He reads Thursday at 7:30 p.m. at the Penn Museum of Anthropology and Archeology.

JANE SOBEL KLONSKY

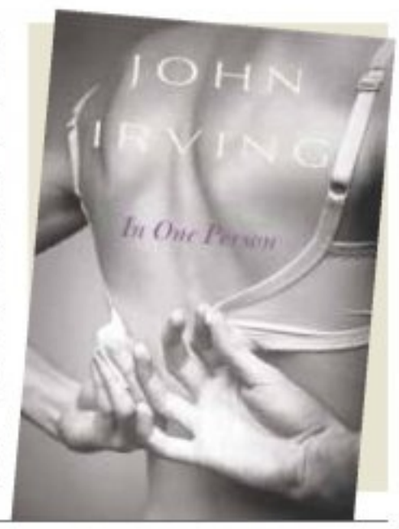
With "In One Person," John Irving may have written his most political book yet.

"The main character — the narrative point of view — is bisexual; the heroes — as I call them — are two transgendered women. Well, by definition, that's a political novel," says the author, leaning back in a chair in his home office. "In France, is that a political novel? In Germany? No! To me, it's kind of tragic that it's a political subject. ... It makes us a joke among countries who are a little more grown up sexually than we are."

"It's kind of tragic that it's a political subject. ... It makes us a joke among countries who are a little more grown up sexually than we are."
IRVING ON SEXUALITY IN AMERICA

Irving speaks like he writes. Long, ornate sentences may take several parenthetical tangents, but they always reach logical conclusions, and often uncover profound human truths.

Throughout the course of a two-hour interview, the author easily steps inside the psyches of characters he has invented in more than 40 years of publishing novels. Critics have suggested that too many of these characters are linked by constants like New England upbringings, parents who have abandoned them, enthusiasm



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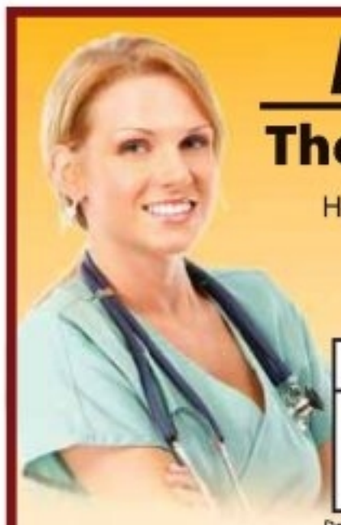

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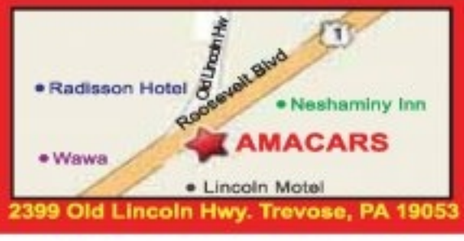

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With his 13th novel, John Irving has written what could be his most political work yet He just hopes for a day when this country will not view such sexually frank discourse as controversial

for writing and/or wrestling, and sexuality in full bloom.

"Obviously, I must like these people whose lives would be described by their society — to be kind — as odd or eccentric," he says.

Of Billy, the bisexual narrator of "In One Person," Irving is particularly sympathetic.

"In my generation," he says, "from the point of view of straight women, the bi guy was not to be trusted. Because who was he going to leave you for: Another woman or a guy? He was doubly untrustworthy. And among gay men of my generation, many of them didn't believe that there was such a thing as a bi guy; that it was just a gay guy with one foot in the closet, who was kind of hedging his bets. And everyone's saying, 'Well, give him time, we'll see how bi he is.' What do you say when 70 years later, that's who the guy is? You have to change your mind."

Talking 'In One Person' in-person

In John Irving's Vermont home, even the fan above his oven is covered with photos. Images of smiling family members are taped to support beams, framed formal pictures stand tented on most counter surfaces and the lifetime of snapshots that line the bulletin boards in the author's office feel like the sort of milestones that flash before one's eyes in a near-death experience.

This is all very fitting for a writer who renders such detailed arcs of his characters' lives, with equal parts humor and gravitas, through childhood innocence to adult understanding and to elderly repose.

"I don't think that I'll ever lose my interest in the passage of time," says Irving. "The challenge is that the passage of time is what makes most of my books long."

Irving credits his ability to write from such varied age perspectives to his three sons.

"There has been one or more of my children living in my house ... for an unusually long time," says the 70-year-old author, whose first son was born when he was 22, and whose youngest son only left for college two years ago.

"If you're around young people a lot ... it keeps your memory connected to who you were and what things were like when you were that age. ... It's been a crucial part of my storytelling process to find that point-of-view character whose eyes are open, their receptive senses are alive, and they are about to learn something."

PAT HEALY
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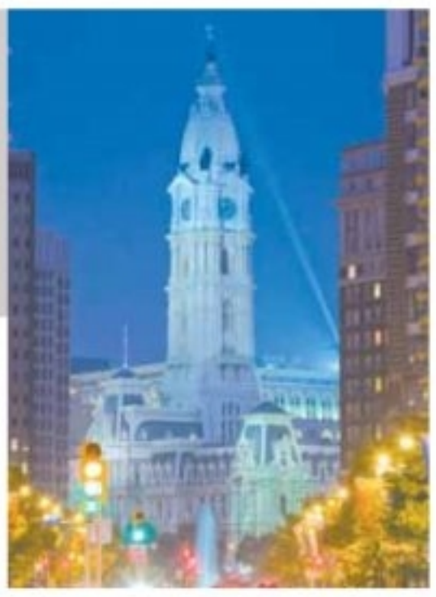

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Making a toxic-free home for your baby

Experts warn about the everyday chemicals to watch out for if you have or are expecting a little one

STOCKBYTE

▶ Read more about chemicals that are potentially hazardous to your health in tomorrow's Metro.

Shiri Sarfati, the executive vice president of seaweed-based skincare line Repêchage, turned her home upside down when she decided to be a mom.

"As soon as we started thinking about having a baby, I wanted our home to be free of chemicals," says the native New Yorker. "When I was pregnant, I became so sensitive to even the smell of Windex, I just couldn't be anywhere near it."

Her body also became sensitive to beauty products, too, and now that she's breastfeeding, she's extravigilant: "If I eat broccoli and it makes the baby gassy, then [it only follows that] if I use a chemical in a skincare product, it's going to have an effect," she surmises.

Annette Rubin, the co-author of "Belli Beautiful: The Essential Guide to the Safest Health and Beauty Products for Pregnancy, Mom, and Baby," agrees. "Pregnant moms should avoid teratogens — ingredients that have been linked to birth defects. New moms should avoid ingredients that may be harmful to their breast milk supply, and babies should be kept clear of hormone-mimicking ingredients."

Rubin says that pregnant and nursing moms need to become label-reading experts: "Deciphering labels can be a challenge," says Rubin. "You have to review the ingredient research and use that knowledge to change your purchasing habits."

What to avoid

These are at the top of Sarfati's chemical no-no list:

- **Petrolatum:** The oil industry by-product is linked with breast cancer. "It's in the leading brand of baby care products and cosmetics. It interferes with the body's natural moisturizers and makes your skin drier."
- **Synthetic fragrance and colors:** "These are superfluous. People want bright, pretty colors, but natural pigments create nice shades, too. We are inhaling these toxic fumes in our homes daily. Fragrances can be a great irritant and cause allergies. Breathing in a toxic cloud is not good."
- **BPA (bisphenol A):** "There are so many BPA-free bottles and toys on the market and many retailers banned BPA products. Glass bottles and wooden toys are also available, but not as widely distributed as plastics. Soft toys made from organic cotton are great as well."

Expert-approved kids' sunscreens

Rubin recommends:

- Babo Botanicals Clear Zinc Sport Stick SPF 30, **$8, www.amazon.com**
- Episencial Sunny Sunscreen SPF 35, **$15, www.drugstore.com**
- Dr. Robin for Kids All Natural Chemical-Free Sunscreen SPF 30, **$28, www.amazon.com**

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Letters

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Tax inequality not so simple to smear

RE: "WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT PERCENT ARE WE NOW?": I'm a little bit tired of the people like Joshua Tordoff who blindly repeat Republican rhetoric without question. Had they just a little independence to do some research they would have found that the founding principles of the "53 percent" is flawed. The notion that "half of Americans don't pay taxes" not only overstates the share of households that do not pay federal income taxes in a typical year; it also ignores the other taxes poor people pay, including federal payroll taxes and state and local taxes. For example, if you look at state and local taxes, the working poor actually pay a higher percentage of their income in these taxes in every state except for Vermont. The top 400 taxpayers — who have more wealth than half of all Americans combined — are paying lower taxes than they have in a generation, as their tax responsibilities have slowly collapsed since the New Deal era as working families have been asked to pay more and more. Rather than taking aim at some of the poorest members of our society — 62 percent of whom have incomes under $20,000 — Americans should be asking how we can get the superwealthy to pay tax rates closer to their modern historical average and how we can lift up the incomes of those who are too impoverished to be asked to pay federal income taxes. **BARB MILUSKI, VIA E-MAIL**

Wall Street needs to be boring again

RE: "WALL STREET ONLY CREATES INEQUALITY": Joseph Connell writes that Wall Street doesn't build, invent, etc. That's true as far as it goes, but financial services are necessary infrastructure for real productivity and creativity. Wall Street is dysfunctional, not nonfunctional. A system that works is cheap and unobtrusive; one that doesn't is expensive and noticeable. Let's make banking boring again, and let's send speculators off to gamble just with each other. **DAN WYLIE-SEARS, VIA E-MAIL**

Meanwhile, in Syria: Slaughter persists

The slaughter in Syria continues unstopped. This shows us two things. First, Bashar al-Assad is a murdering monster, much the way his father was before him in Hama in 1982. And second, the Obama administration was naive in assuming a few nice words and a cute smile could turn Syria from a brutal dictatorship supporting terrorism. **ARTHUR HORN, VIA E-MAIL**

More on taxes: Obama the tyrant

Now that we have dutifully wrapped up our federal taxes for 2011 and helped pay for the waste and thievery in Washington, we can look ahead to what the descendants of Marx, Lenin and Engels have in mind for us for next year. If you are in the 10 percent bracket, kiss it goodbye because you will now be in the 15 percent bracket. That will gouge everybody even more, not just the $250,000-and-up earners. Elections matter. This administration is making a conscious effort to destroy the middle class any way it can. Remember in November. **JOHN SANGENARIO, VIA E-MAIL**

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Horoscope

♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** If you believe you have a better way to do something at work, it behooves you to offer your suggestion to a person who can make things happen.

♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** You can reap rewards for yourself at work by being helpful to someone who is struggling. The bigwigs will most likely notice, and the other party will remember your aid, as well.

♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** This could be a very productive day for you, owing to your ability to put everything in its proper perspective. You'll know what to tackle and how to do so effectively.

♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** With your exceptional leadership and organizational skills, it shouldn't be too difficult to get others to follow your directives. They'll see that what you ask is good for them as well.

♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** Overall conditions specifically favor projects that would enhance your material security in ways that could be long-lasting. Things look very promising in this regard.

♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** Don't attempt to use flattery, subterfuge or insincerity when trying to make a pitch for something you want. Your colleagues will see right through you, and it won't help your case.

♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** The interests of you and your associates can be advanced if you treat people the way that you'd want to be treated. It's an old formula, but one that always works.

♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** If you need the assistance of an old friend, state your case clearly and factually. When she or he realizes your need, your pal will come through for you without having to be badgered.

♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** Your chances for successfully fulfilling a large personal ambition are above normal. In addition to your strong will to do so, Lady Luck will help things fall in line for you.

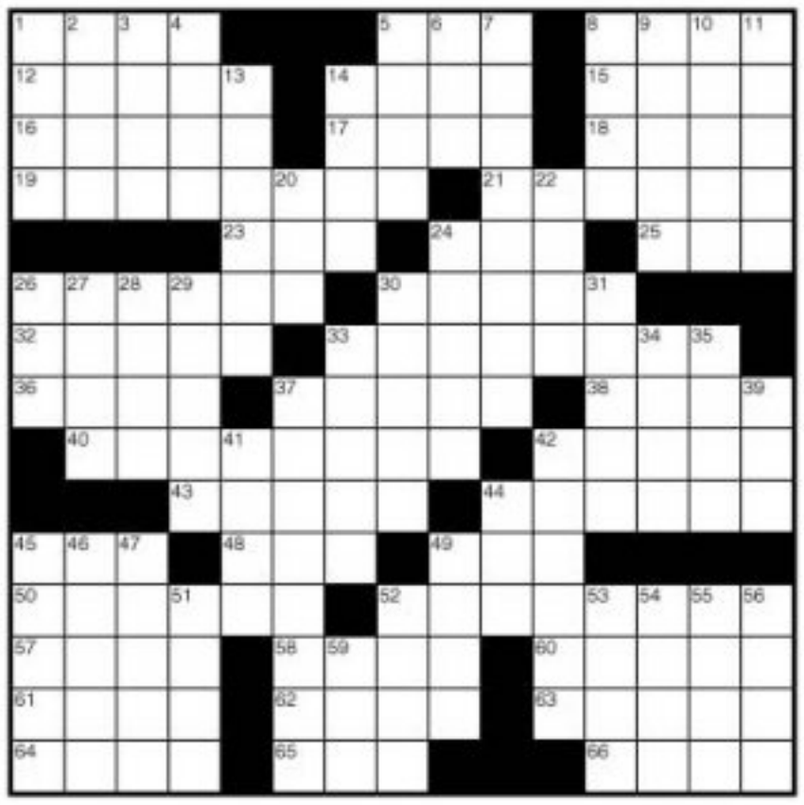
♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** Recognition that escaped you in the past regarding a certain project is likely to come at last. It's a situation that appears to be taking on a life of its own.

♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** When it comes to accomplishing your career objectives, stick to proven methods and procedures. What functioned well for you before will work even better for you now.

♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** Because your intuitive perceptions are likely to be accurately zeroing in on the potential outcome of events, trust your instincts with impunity. **BERNICE BEDE OSOL**

Across
1 Peal of thunder
5 Cosmonaut's station
8 Minnows
12 Fix up a house
14 Knight's weapon
15 Mme. Gluck of opera
16 Familiar saying
17 Tel __
18 Headliner
19 Entry points
21 Time of the mammoths (2 wds.)
23 Khan of note
24 Md. neighbor
25 Lo-__ graphics
26 Adult
30 Watered silk
32 Archaeology find
33 Walked (2 wds.)
36 Civil offense
37 Quail family
38 9-to-5 units, commonly
40 Excused
42 Like an injured leg
43 Readied the bow
44 Birds with toes
45 Opposite of ruddy
48 Watch secretly
49 Sweater letter
50 Gold Rush state
52 Seismic events
57 156, to Cato
58 Rock's __ Straits
60 Eyewash acid
61 German canal city
62 Cloudburst
63 Joshua tree, e.g.
64 Bellow
65 U.K. part
66 Auto import

Down
1 Jagged rock
2 Helen of Troy's mother
3 At the drop of __ __
4 Leaf through
5 Dallas NBAers
6 Here, to Henri
7 Bring back to life
8 Headquarters
9 Sacred table
10 Portrait
11 Container weights
13 Watch out!
14 Pyramid builder
20 Stone or Ice
22 Give a darn
24 Wheedled
26 Colo. setting
27 Standing on
28 Prefix for "trillion"
29 Modern lead-in
30 Budged
31 A funny Murphy
33 Bear's delight
34 Poet's foot
35 Use a keyboard
37 Buddy
39 UNIX or DOS
41 Common UFO shape
42 Dirty
44 Herd of whales
45 Zany
46 Jane Curtin role
47 Belly button
49 Adolescent
51 Housecat's perch
52 Spruce
53 Harris and Piniella
54 "Free Willy" whale
55 Costa __
56 Accident reminder
59 Fleming of spydom



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8	4				7	1		3
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SUDOKU **LEVEL: EASY**

6								8
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	3	5				2	9	
				9			6	
	2	8			9		3	
	6		5		1		4	2
4								5

SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

Solution to yesterday's crossword

S	W	I	S	H		K	I	S	S		P	O	N	D
T	A	B	L	E		O	M	I	T		E	L	I	E
I	D	I	O	M		A	M	B	O		A	L	E	C
R	E	S	E	M	B	L	E		M	A	R	A	C	A
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D	E	N	Y		S	T	E	T		G	E	S	S	O

How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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destinations

The Ecuador escape

Make the central part of the planet the center of your attention You can even find the equator with a GPS

When most people think about planning a trip to Ecuador, they imagine visiting either the big cities — like Quito, the capital — or the luxurious Galapagos Islands. But in between, there's an array of travel opportunities that often get overlooked. Bordered by Colombia, Peru and the Pacific Ocean, the Republic of Ecuador is divided into three distinctly different landscapes: the coast, the Andes Mountains and the Amazon Rainforest.

The coast: You can soak in the beach life without shelling out big bucks for the Galapagos. Close to Manta, a port city in the Manabi Province, you can set out on Isla Corazon (Heart Island) mangrove tours and explore the heritage of more rural villages. A few hours' drive brings you to Alandaluz Hosteria, an eco-lodge with pools and a private beach **(www.alandaluzhosteria.com)**. Further south in Santa Elena, Salinas is nicknamed "Little Miami" for its fun-in-the-sun reputation. Nearby, Los Frailes is considered one of the country's most beautiful beaches.

The Andes: One major highlight is the Middle of the World, at the line of the equator in Pinchincha Province. You can learn about the physics and history of this intriguing geographical spot at its present, GPS-verified location — or at the site of the original monument, approximately 240 meters south. Don't miss El Crater, a restaurant and hotel located in Mirador del Puluagua on the edge of a large, scenic volcanic crater. With actual clouds wafting past at eye-level, the quirky-yet-upscale venue offers an exquisite sense of atmosphere **(www.elcrater.com)**.

The Amazon: You can make an entire trip out of a jaunt to the Amazon. The rainforest offers a one-of-a-kind getaway where you can turn off your electronics, explore nature and escape from the world. Choose from retreats like the Napo Wildlife Center, where packages include lodging, meals and activities. Bilingual guides lead hikes, bird-watching and canoe trips **(www.napowildlifecenter.com)**.

El Ventanal restaurant

Pit stop

In the middle of the three regions, Quito is an excellent place for rest and culture. Stunning churches, museums, nightlife and plenty of shopping can be found in the nation's capital. Worth the steep drive through the city's colonial center, **El Ventanal** restaurant offers upscale dining with breathtaking panoramic views **(www.elventanal.ec)**.

The rainforest offers a one-of-a-kind getaway where you can turn off your electronics, explore nature and escape from the world.

Ecuador is easy

- English is commonly spoken in major areas
- Ecuador uses American dollars as currency
- It's on EST, except during Daylight Saving Time
- Electric outlets take U.S. plugs without conversion

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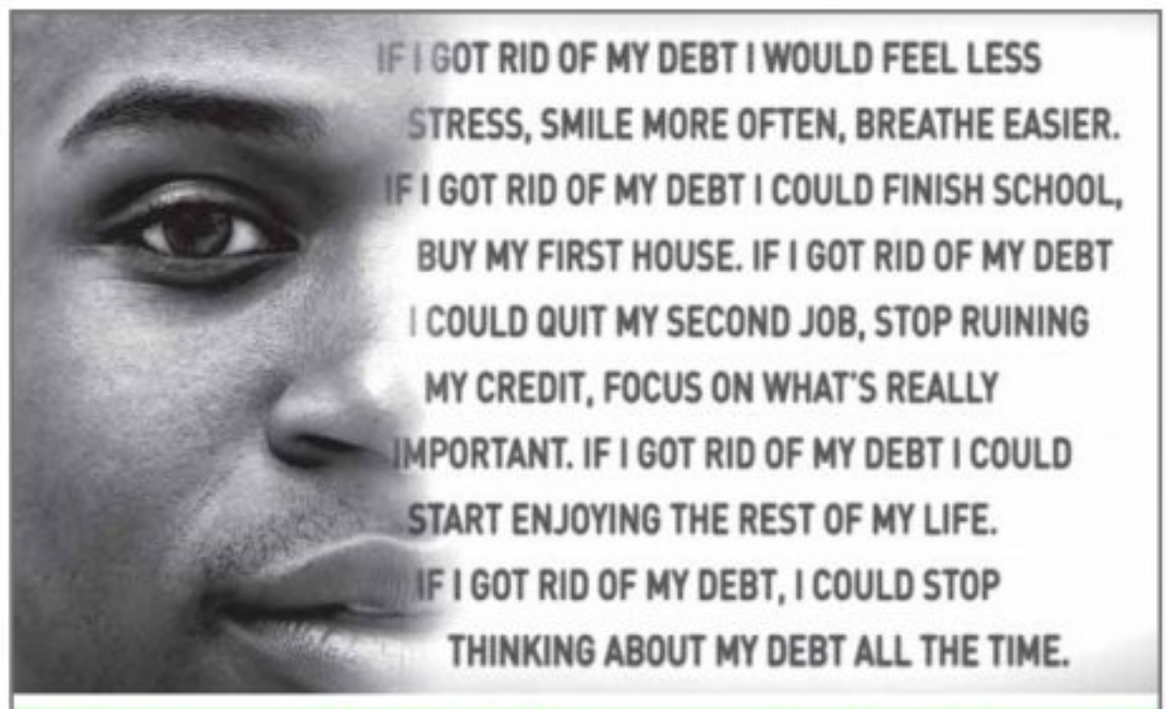
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WOMEN'S HEALTH

A SPECIAL SECTION FOR METRO
MAY 08, 2012

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Should you opt for natural skin care products?

Though the FDA approves the safety of skin care ingredients, there's growing concern that the synthetic chemicals we put on our skins are as potentially harmful as those we eat.

"These chemicals are detrimental inside and out," says Christina Mahar, founder of Sia Botanics, which shuns parabens, sulfates, colors, fragrance and petrochemicals. "I'm a big believer that artificial colors and fragrances are really toxic. The irony is, these products that are supposed to improve how we look and be anti-aging are often the opposite," she adds. "Many synthetics cause free radical damage, which is the foundation of aging skin. On the front end, the product feels good, you might look better, but a few years down the line your skin looks older than it should."

Input from the medical community is behind the FDA ruling on product safety, though.

"I agree with the FDA that there has been no conclusive link between parabens and breast cancer, even though very low amounts have been found in breast tissue," says the American Academy of Dermatology's Dr. Susan Taylor. " I think that in low concentrations they are safe in cosmetic products."

"A lot of ingredients get bad reps," says Jeffrey James Shoe, CEO of Jeffrey James Botanicals. "Sometimes it's marketing, sometimes there's truth to it. I have definitely read way too many articles about parabens not to think there are some possible links to cancer. I avoid all products with synthetic fragrances [and] mineral oils, and people that test on animals aren't friends of mine."

Keep track

Education is key, but Googling every ingredient is exhausting.

"Keep track of what is in your skin care just the same as you do your food," says Mahar. "It can be overwhelming; there are so many ingredients to be aware of. Find a brand you know you can trust."

Shoe agrees: "Do your homework; find an organic brand that works [for you]. Look at the back ingredient deck. If there are more ingredients [you don't recognize than do], then pass."

But Dr. Taylor says you don't have to go overboard: "In general, I think that most synthetic chemicals found in cosmetic products are safe."

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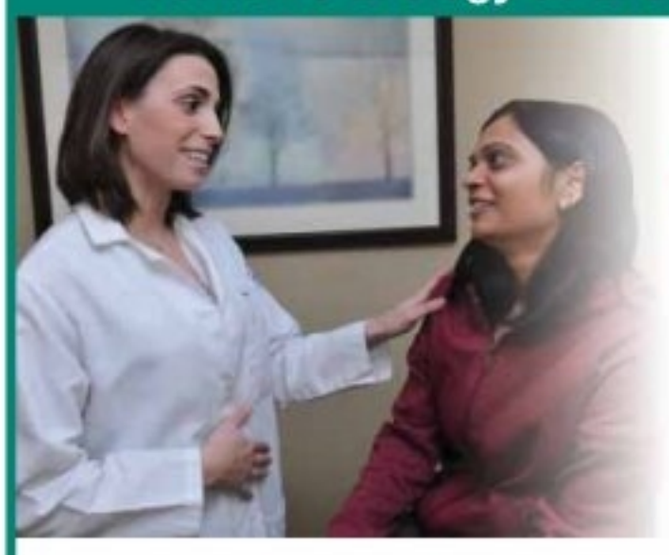

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Get your body ready for a bikini

It's time to start thinking about that most merciless of garments that even the truly toned professional trainers dread: the bikini.

"Even I go through the exact same thing every woman goes through at this time of year when they start thinking about putting on a bikini," says Jackie Warner, a FitOrbit-certified trainer, author and star of Bravo's "Thintervention" (www.jackie-warner.fitorbit.com). "The bikini is very unforgiving."

"I say crunches are a waste of time ... Crunches can build muscle under fat and make the belly look even bigger."

But even though summer is just around the corner, there's still time to get toned up. Get going now with a bikini-ready workout (and watching what you eat) in order to hit the beach this summer sporting that taut bum and tight tum you crave.

Warner says there are misconceptions on which exercises work best. For instance, for tightening up the belly, most people hit the floor for some crunches.

"I say crunches are a waste of time. It's the slowest way to build muscle," she says. "Crunches can build muscle under fat and make the belly look even bigger."

Instead, she recommends not concentrating on the almighty "washboard" upper abs — the lower abdominals are what pulls a woman's belly in more. Warner chooses squats and lunges over crunches, and planks and push-ups over sit-ups. These tighten up those bikini-sensitive areas — tummy, butt and thighs — all at the same time.

"People don't like lunges; I don't like lunges. But they are very effective. Planks work the whole lower body and result in a firm, rounder butt. Simple military-style push-ups give tremendous core strengthening, too."

Keep it very simple, Warner advises, but keep moving in order to burn fat as you tone.

"Don't take rests in between exercises. If you keep moving hard, it builds up your heart rate and metabolism. One important thing to remember is that the body plateaus. The body adapts. If you want keep up the progress, change your routine every month."

SIMPLE EXERCISES FOR ACHIEVING THAT BIKINI BODY

FLAT FLYE

- Hold a dumbbell in each hand and lie on your back.
- With your palms facing each other, extend your arms straight up so that the dumbbells are directly over your chest.
- Slightly bend your elbows and extend them downward in an arc until you feel a complete stretch in your upper chest.
- Hold the open position for a pause.
- Now squeeze your chest muscles and draw your arms back to the starting position.

FRONT ALTERNATING LUNGE

- Begin with your feet together, your chest out and your shoulders back. Hold a dumbbell in each hand at your sides.
- Take a big step forward on your right foot and lower the opposite knee to the ground.
- Push back to the starting position without bouncing. Make sure you put your weight on the lunging heel, not on your toe.
- Alternate to your left side, repeating the movement.

STRAIGHT LEG DROP

- Lie on your back with your legs lifted so that they are perpendicular to the floor and your hands are palm-down gripping the floor.
- Slowly lower your legs until they are two inches from the floor.
- Raise to the starting position.

DEEP SQUAT

- Stand with your feet a little wider than shoulder-width apart and your knees slightly bent.
- Hold a dumbbell in each hand for increased resistance.
- Keeping your head neutral, abs tight and torso erect, bend at the knees and hips to slowly lower your body as if you were going to sit down in a chair. Your thighs should be parallel to the floor.
- Straighten your legs to the starting position, pressing back up from your heels.

Top foods for a flatter stomach

By Joy Bauer, MS, RD

With swimsuit season just around the corner, bloat has become public enemy number one. Everyday bloating can be caused by water retention (typically from eating too many salty foods), or by overdoing it on gassy foods (think high-fiber cereals and bars, broccoli and Brussels sprouts) that puff you up with extra air.

Whatever the cause, it's downright uncomfortable…and certainly doesn't flatter your warm weather wardrobe. While no one food can flatten a flabby belly, there are some strategic nibbles that can help you get a smashing bikini bod in time for summer.

WATERMELON

Loaded with water (which helps fill you up, and flushes out extra water and salt), this super-sweet, vitamin C-rich summer fruit clocks in at less than 100 calories per cup or large wedge.

GRILLED VEGGIES

Load your grill with mushrooms, onions, bell peppers, zucchini, eggplant and asparagus — you'll fill up and be more apt to pass on the heavier sides like macaroni and potato salad. For an easy, low-cal prep, spray your veggies with an oil mister and lightly toss with preferred seasonings.

FROZEN RED/PURPLE GRAPES

At only 80 calories per cup, frozen grapes are the perfect way to satisfy a sweet tooth without packing on the pounds. Plus, the red and purple varieties are brimming with antioxidants.

CUCUMBERS

Cucumbers are loaded with water and naturally low in sodium. Plus, they're slim-sational: One whole cucumber provides only 45 calories.

BANANAS

For about 105 calories, bananas provide a hearty dose of potassium, which helps rid your body of extra sodium. Less sodium = less bloat!

'NUDE' AIR-POPPED POPCORN

It's an ideal guilt-free munch food: Each popped cup has two grams of fiber and only 30 calories. But be sure to go easy on the salt — try other seasonings like chili powder, garlic powder, cinnamon…even a few dashes of hot sauce!

EGG WHITES

One egg white provides only 17 calories and four grams of filling protein, which means an egg white omelet is the perfect slimming morning meal. Plus, studies show that eating a protein-rich breakfast can help curb appetite later in the day and boost weight loss efforts. A flatter stomach is on the way!

UNSWEETENED ICED TEA AND COFFEE

Calorie-free and full of antioxidants, these refreshing, cool beverages fill you up and help flush out extra sodium. Add a shot of natural sweetness to cold tea by slicing in fresh fruit and refrigerating overnight. And stick with skim or 1 percent low-fat cow's milk, soy milk or unsweetened almond milk for the coffee.

For more slimming tips, follow Joy Bauer on Facebook and Twitter (@joybauer) and visit www.joybauer.com.

Don't confuse vanity with a healthy self-esteem

Are clothes-shopping, weight-watching, manicures, facials and hair appointments narcissistic, or just maintenance for a more confident you? That depends how far you take things, says body image specialist Stacey Rosenfeld, Ph.D.

"It's not vanity to take care of yourself, " Dr. Rosenfeld says. "When you're saying no to social events to go to the gym and have Botox appointments, and missing out on life, then it's a problem. Pride in how you present yourself can totally help your self-esteem — and that's healthy."

Grooming equals confidence, particularly in the workplace. Sometimes women who don't take the time to beautify grow unhealthfully resentful of those who do and adopt antisocial behaviors themselves.

"Modern women are not good self-carers," says Dr. Rosenfeld. "They put that last behind work and family. But investing time and energy in yourself is essential. It has to be moved higher up on most women's priority list."

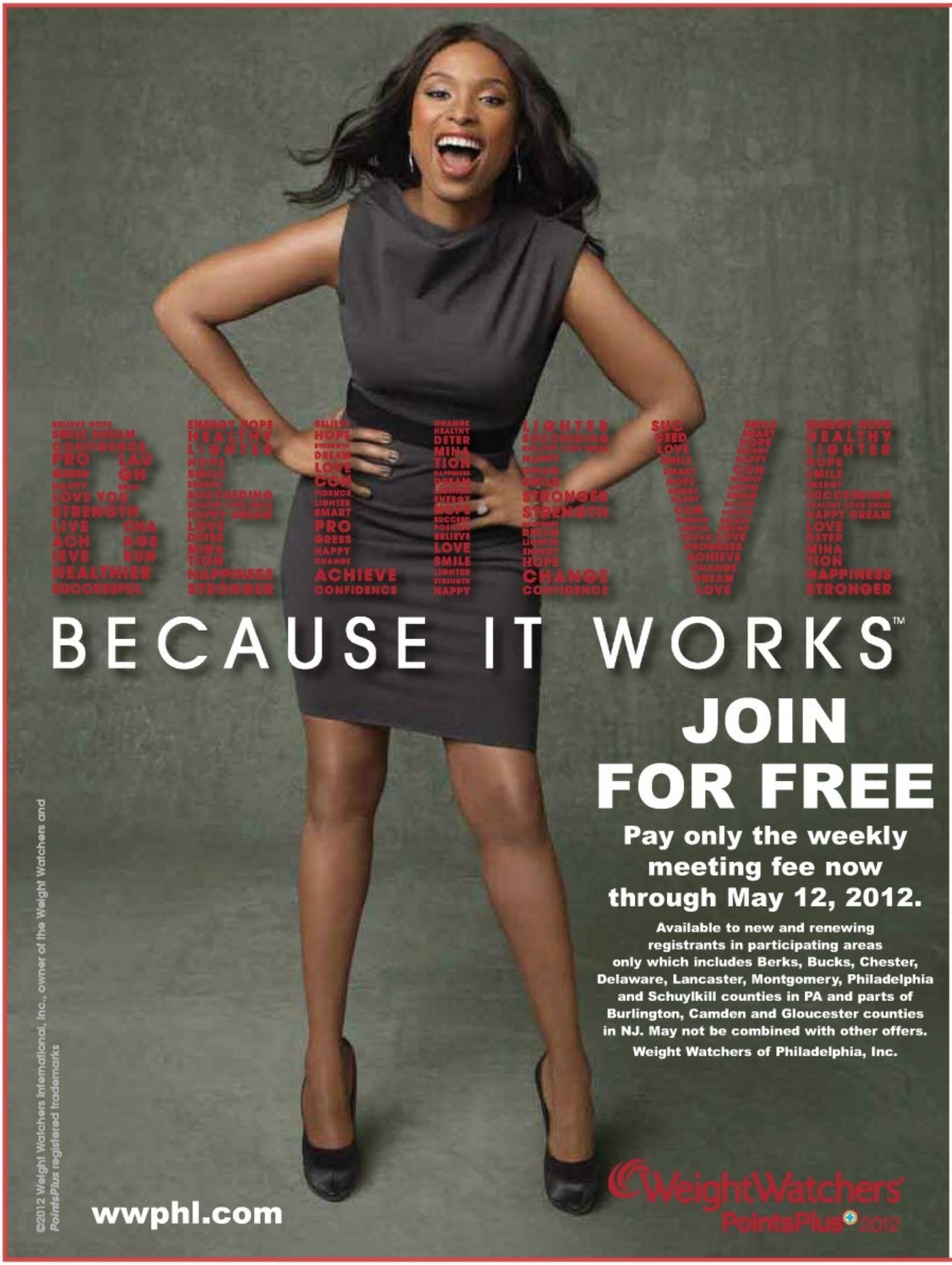
It's infectious, too. Caring about yourself and your appearance can inspire others to do the same.

"It also sends a good message to our daughters," Dr. Rosenfeld adds. "I take care of myself; you should take care of yourself. Caring about yourself informs others of your value and that they should take care of you, too."

Does having a bad hair day destroy your self-esteem? Cynthia Bulik, Ph.D, recommends asking yourself how much your body esteem (how you feel about your physical appearance: your size, shape, hair and features) defines your self-esteem (how you feel about your personality, relationships, accomplishments, values and appearance).

"Test yourself by going out without makeup, wearing sweats and a T-shirt," says Dr. Bulik, the director of the University of North Carolina Eating Disorders Program and author of "The Woman in the Mirror: How to Stop Confusing What You Look Like With Who You Are." "Can you still interact with people, look them straight in the eye and be yourself, or do you feel like you can't be yourself without your cosmetic armor? That is an excellent test to see whether you're hiding behind cosmetics and fashion, or just using them as an added extra."

• Linda Clarke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DE-FUZZING DEMYSTIFIED

If you only want onlookers to notice your rockin' beach bod — and not your body hair — here's how to pick the best hair-removal option for you

Shaving, waxing, threading, tweezing, lasering, electrolysis: Choosing the right hair removal procedure can be confusing, but it's often a question of convenience and money. At the expensive end of the de-fuzzing scale is laser hair removal, which promises "permanent" results after several sessions.

"We call it permanent reduction," says New York State licensed aesthetician Melissa Cavanaugh, owner of Manhattan's Pulse Laser & Skincare Center. "It doesn't work on blond or gray hairs, only dark. It cuts the blood supply off to the bulb of the hair follicle and takes about six to eight sessions. But there's a big upfront cost, even if it saves time and money in the long run." (Full-leg laser hair removal at Pulse costs $600, or six treatments for $3,000).

Those gray and blond hairs are remedied by tweezing or electrolysis, the latter another method that promises removal by killing off the hair's blood supply. Because electrolysis works hair by hair, it's not practical for large areas and is usually used for dark facial hair.

Waxing is a less expensive and more convenient option, especially for your bikini line. "You might want that hair to grow back," advises Cavanaugh. "Waxing is a better option for that — it's not a permanent solution." And the good news is that many studios today have perfected a method that won't leave you whimpering home in pain.

Though it results in quick regrowth and prickly stubble, shaving in the shower is the quickest and simplest hair removal method. Contrary to popular opinion, Cavanaugh says shaving doesn't make hair grow back thicker: "That's a myth. It appears to be coarser because shaved hair grows back with a blunt edge. But it's the same hair."

CHOOSE WISELY

Plan ahead before any hair removal procedure, Cavanaugh says: "Do some research, be informed and choose only a licensed aesthetician. I've seen a lot of scary mistakes with laser and waxing, too. If you're taking antibiotics, leave at least two weeks before a laser treatment. And don't remove hair from sunburned skin, or if you have a rash. It will irritate it, or cause it to spread."

What about topical hair removers?

"People still use creams, but the chemicals in those are absorbed through the skin into the bloodstream," Cavanaugh says. "I would never use those."

• Linda Clarke

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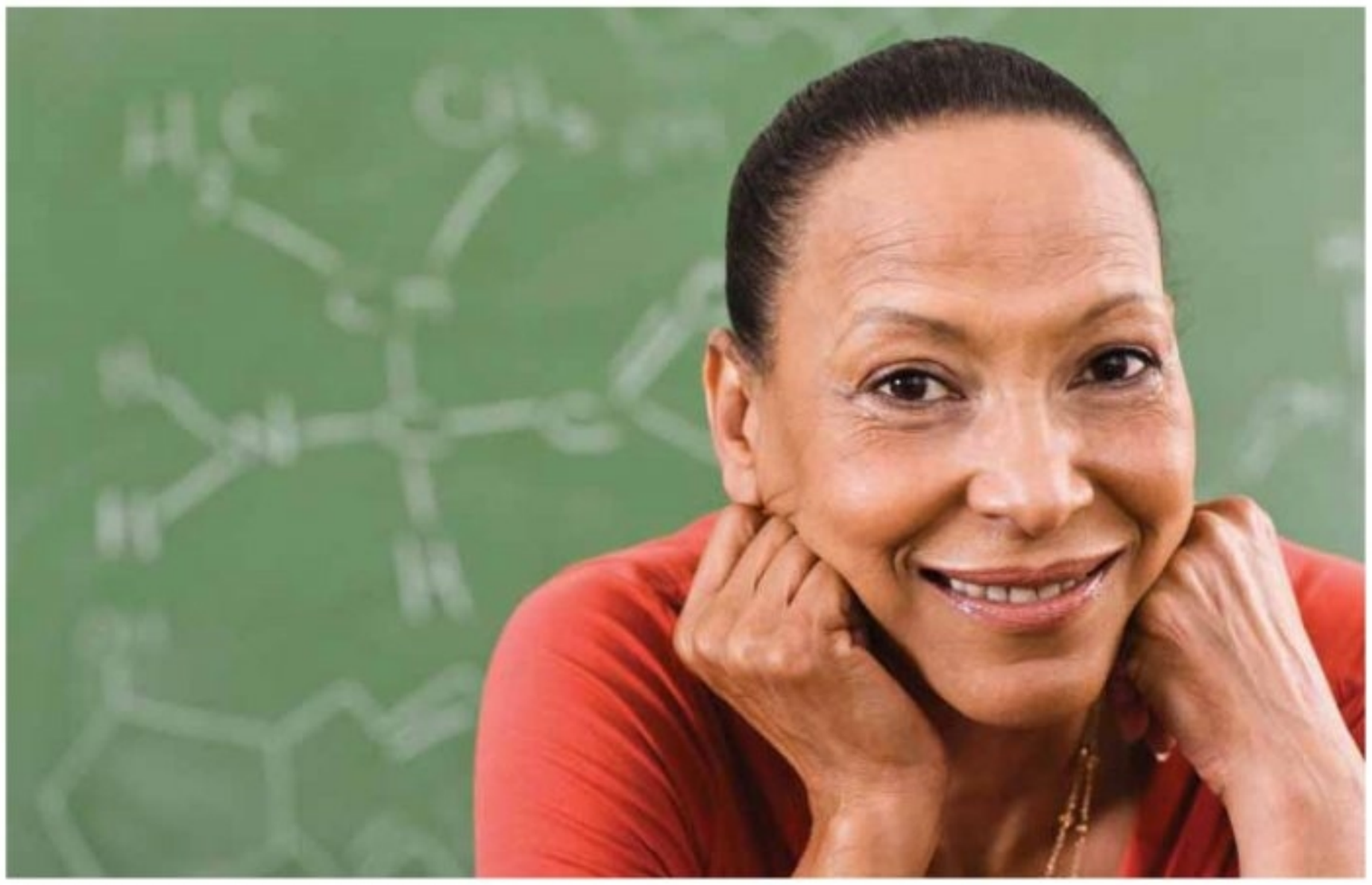

GOT FIBROIDS?

Especially if you are a black woman in the third or fourth decade of life, the answer to this question is probably 'yes.'

Seen in 70 percent of reproductive age women, fibroids are the most common reason for surgical removal of the uterus in the U.S. In addition to the risks and consequences of this invasive procedure, fibroids are also associated with profuse menstrual bleeding, anemia, pelvic pain, infertility and miscarriage.

Dr. Serene Srouji, a gynecologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital notes that "many women have such heavy bleeding from fibroids that it interferes with their ability to work and care for their children and go about the tasks of daily living."

It has been recognized that fibroids are about three times more prevalent in black than in white women and that the predisposition to developing fibroids runs in some families. Despite their major public health impact, the cause of fibroids remains unknown.

The Center for Uterine Fibroids at BWH is conducting a research study, "Finding Genes for Uterine Fibroids," which is aimed at identifying the causes of uterine fibroids and brings hope to many women and their families, as it seeks to provide the answers and non-surgical treatment options desperately needed for future generations.

"The only completely effective treatment we currently have for fibroids is hysterectomy, an invasive surgery that forces women to give up their fertility," says Dr. Cynthia Morton, Director of Cytogenetics at BWH and Research Director of the Center for Uterine Fibroids. "This research is essential in developing alternative treatments and eventually alleviating the suffering of so many women."

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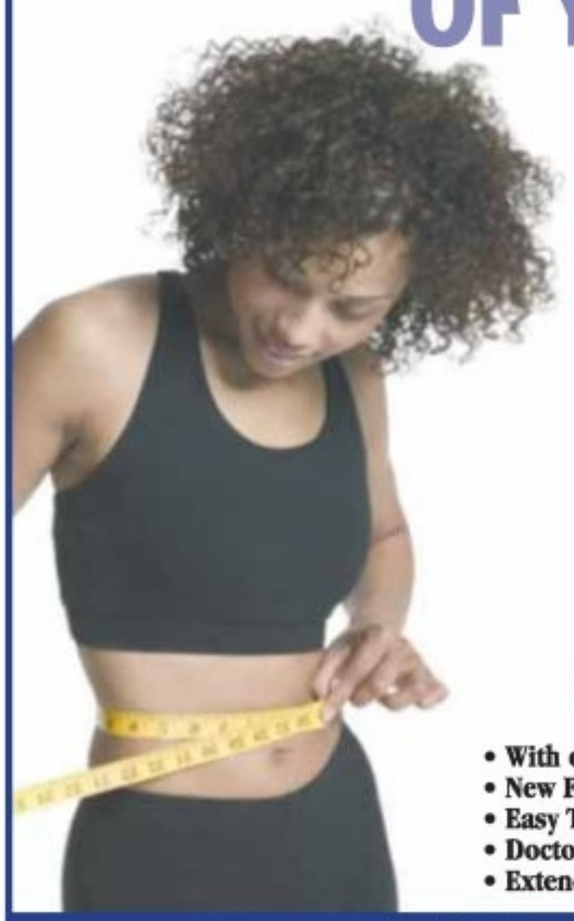

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Whether you want a baby or not — read on

Over the last few years, in vitro fertilization (IVF) — the process of fertilizing egg cells outside the womb and re-implanting them — decreased in the U.S. Why the drop?

Dr. Elizabeth Ginsburg, medical director of Brigham & Women's Hospital's In-Vitro Fertilization Program, says possible factors are growing concerns about genetic defects, excessive population growth and, as it's generally a self-pay procedure, the economic recession. But as IVF promises ever-improved successful pregnancy rates, it's not likely to disappear.

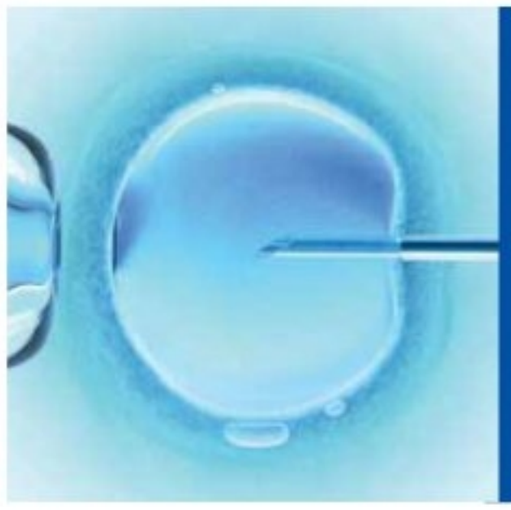
"The procedure is evolving all the time," Dr. Ginsburg says. "[We can now] evaluate the chromosomes to choose the most vital embryo. You can't change what an embryo is, just try to transfer the ones that result in a successful pregnancy."

Embryo freezing is more successful nowadays, too. Eggs harvested from women in their twenties are traditionally more viable, but eggs from women in their late thirties have an increased survival rate.

"There are highly improved protocols for elective egg freezing, which helps women who choose to become mothers at an older age. Egg freezing, whether it's from an older woman or younger, has a technically good outcome nowadays."

There is the tricky question, though, of how old is too old for motherhood.

"There's an ethical judgment to be made," says Dr. Ginsburg. "On the medical side, we ask, 'Is the woman healthy enough to tolerate a pregnancy?' Fifty is generally the cut-off for IVF. It's complicated, but we have to draw the line, and 50 is a good, reasonable age to do that at."



The latest in contraception

Transdermal patches, vaginal rings, single-rod implants and long-term intrauterine contraception are proving to be safer, no-fuss contraception options for women these days.

"The trend in contraception is for methods that are forgettable," says Dr. Caryn Dutton, Brigham & Women's medical director of the gynecology practice. "Women can get them placed and they are long-acting. Then they forget about them."

Though some contraception has added benefits, like the easing of heavy menstrual bleeding, there are always concerns about side effects. Talk to your doctor about options that would be best for you.

"Contraception is an appropriate risk for most healthy women," Dr. Dutton says. "The risk of an unwanted pregnancy outweighs possible side effects for most women."

• Linda Clarke

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Opinion

ANGELO CATALDI
THE VOICE OF THE PHILLY SPORTS FAN

HAPPY STINKO DE MAYO FROM THE PHILLIES

There we were, 40 dedicated fans, clad in sombreros and Phillies jerseys, dancing our way to Washington for a Saturday fiesta. It was Cinco de Mayo, and we were ready to party. Then our team showed up and put a quick end to the revelry.

Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages. Opposing viewpoints are welcome. Send submissions to letters@metro.us.

The 2012 Phillies are party poopers. They are maddening in their inconsistency, frightening in their flaws. They are a long, long way from the deep and hungry championship team of four years ago. Their lineup is listless, their bullpen is terrible and their manager is lost. What began as Cinco de Mayo ended as Stinko de Mayo.

We marched on Washington (rolled, really, since we used a bus) to declare our superiority over the upstart Nationals and came home a few hours later with a sobering new perspective. The Nats are a better team than the Phillies right now. They might be a better team later, too, when Chase Utley and Ryan Howard return.

Quoted

The message was sent. The standings don't lie. Our team is a bottom feeder.

The precise moment when this sad reality struck me and my Phillie 40 was in the fifth inning, as Jayson Werth, of all people, lined a three-run homer to left field to give Washington a lead we were pretty sure the Nationals would never relinquish. These days, a two-run deficit is practically insurmountable for these Phillies.

What made our trek even more poignant was observing for ourselves that first blush of affection between a team and a city when years of waiting are rewarded with youth and talent, and winning. Washington is us in 2006, just as Utley and Howard, and Jimmy Rollins and Cole Hamels, were all reaching maturity together.

▶ Bryce Harper

The Phillies avoided a sweep with a big win on Sunday night — thanks to the indomitable will of Hamels — but the message was already sent and received. This unprecedented era of success for the Phillies is nearing its inevitable conclusion, if it hasn't ended already. The standings don't lie. Our team is a bottom feeder.

Does anyone really believe the Utley and Howard we get back will resemble the superstars of three or four years ago? Is there one fan who honestly believes Michael Schwimer, Chad Qualls, Joe Savery, Brian Sanches and ancient Jose Contreras can be trusted? And who really believes Charlie Manuel is capable of masterminding one more World Series march?

Last winter, the Nationals decided to reclaim their ballpark from Phillies fans with a flamboyant promotion. Now it looks like they didn't need to organize anything. Their young and talented players have already done it for them.

*– **Angelo Cataldi** is the host of 94 WIP's Morning Show, which airs weekdays 5:30 to 10 a.m.*

Flyers lost their mojo

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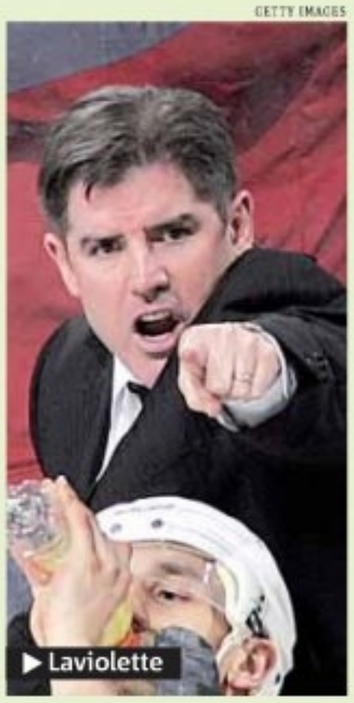

▶ Laviolette

The Flyers are a lazy team. They say they'd like to keep playing the way they did in the first round, when they upset Pittsburgh, but they aren't willing to pay the price. Lazy. That's the worst four-letter word you can pin on an NHL team. And that's what the Flyers are.

After another lackluster effort in Game 4, the Flyers used shorthand for the word, but the meaning was obvious. They said New Jersey "wanted it more," and were "winning all the little battles for the puck." In short, the Devils are desperate to continue playing hockey. The Flyers are hoping for good tee times.

To a blue-collar city, there is nothing more maddening than a team that refuses to try as hard as it can. Heck, coach Peter Laviolette called a timeout five minutes into Game 4 because he saw his players mailing in another performance. They responded with two quick goals, before sleepwalking through the rest of a 4-2 loss.

Hockey is the least complicated of our major sports. If you work hard, good things happen. If you don't, you're down 3-1 in a series you're supposed to win.

The list of lollygaggers is long: Jaromir Jagr, Scott Hartnell, Matt Read, Wayne Simmonds, and maybe Claude Giroux. Most of those same names were the heroes versus Pittsburgh, and now they are goats. Why? No one seems to know.

Here's what I do know. The Flyers have one game left to find their hearts and their legs, and to change the mind of a city that is losing faith fast.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ We're not jumping on the Sixers' bandwagon.

Sixers are frauds

The Sixers have already exceeded all expectations. They will have much to crow about this offseason. Most of it will be pure bunk.

I'm sorry to rain on the playoff parade, but I am a cynic when it comes to our resurgent basketball team and their Svengali, Doug Collins. Yes, with a 3-1 lead against Chicago, they are further along than they were last year. But what does this playoff success mean? Very little, actually.

First, these are not the No. 1 seed Bulls that the Sixers are beating. Without MVP Derrick Rose, Chicago is no threat to win the NBA title. The Sixers are merely feeding off the corpse of a real contender.

Second, the Sixers remain a muddle themselves, despite the current success. Evan Turner is again showing signs of emerging as a possible star, but at what cost? Can he coexist with Jrue Holiday? Will the real Spencer Hawes please stand up? And Andre Iguodala is still on the roster, so failure is inevitable.

Enjoy this unexpected run if you are so inclined. I am not. The Sixers are really no closer to an NBA title. If you doubt me, stay tuned. The second round — and a harsh dose of reality — will provide all the convincing you need.

Idle thoughts from Cataldi

1 Sounds of silence. Roy Halladay had the worst game of his Phillies career, and immediately left the team for "personal reasons." Is it asking too much for just a little more information? The silence that followed Halladay's return one day later answered that. Yes, it is asking too much.

2 Break glass in emergency. How many leads is Charlie Manuel going to blow before he uses Jonathan Papelbon in the eighth inning? He's lost five games waiting for the ninth. Dumb. If the Phillies could ignore baseball tradition with their historic $51 million deal for a closer, they can ignore it again.

3 No statue for Howie. If you don't mind, I'm going to hold off on the testimonials for Howie Roseman until the third-year GM actually brings in a Pro Bowler. Yes, his draft last month looked good. Now let's wait until these players actually perform in the NFL before we build a statue for Howie.

3

Ouch!

Report: Werth out 12 weeks

Former Phillie and current Nationals outfielder Jayson Werth will be out for 12 weeks, according to MLB.com.

Werth injured his left wrist in the sixth inning Sunday night trying to catch a blooper and underwent surgery yesterday to repair it.

He missed the entire 2006 season with a broken left wrist that nearly ended his career.

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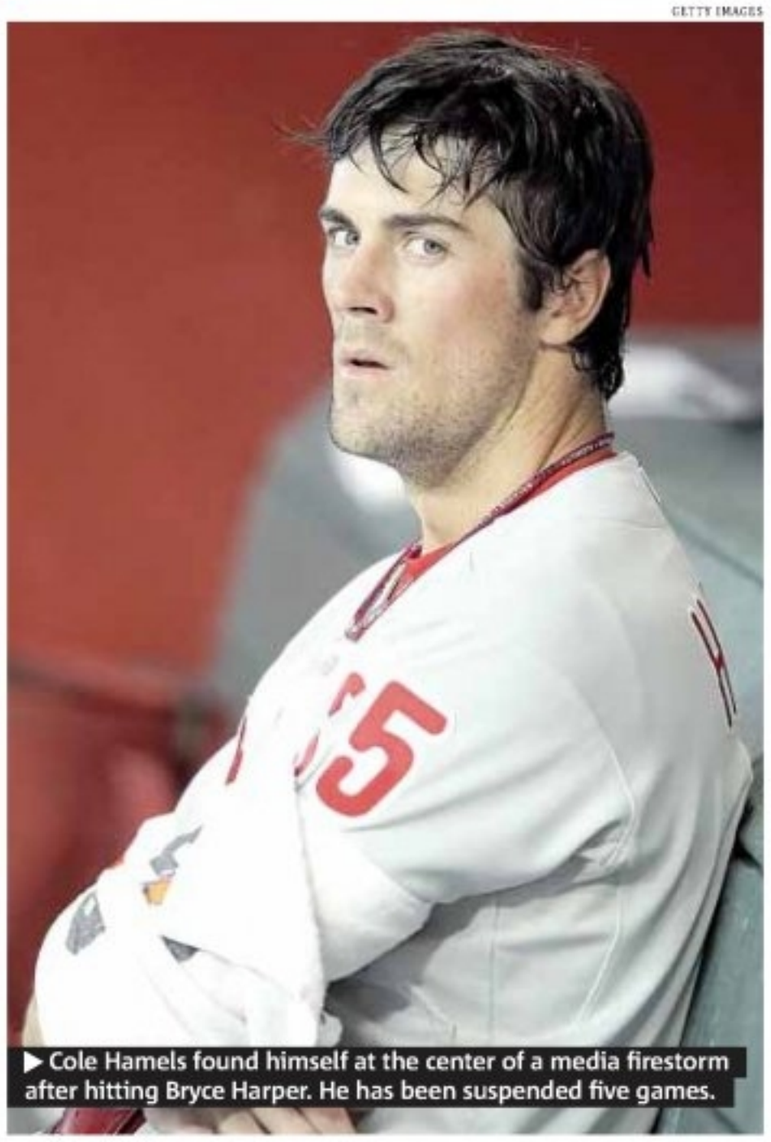

▶ Cole Hamels found himself at the center of a media firestorm after hitting Bryce Harper. He has been suspended five games.

Do the crime, serve the time

▶ Hamels, Giroux shelved with separate suspensions ▶ Phillies pitcher banned five games, Flyers star out for Game 5 ▶ New rivalry born in DC?

Call it Monday bloody Monday.

Two prominent Philadelphia athletes found themselves suspended yesterday following what some deemed as "classless" and "gutless" actions — depending which side of the fence you reside on — over the weekend.

The Phillies' Cole Hamels has been banned for five games after intentionally drilling Nationals rookie Bryce Harper in the back with a 93-mph fastball during Sunday night's 9-3 win.

The Flyers' Claude Giroux was also disciplined for an illegal check on Dainius Zubrus. Giroux is out for Game 5 after his shoulder struck Zubrus squarely in the head.

"I'm not a dirty player. I'm not there to hurt anybody," Giroux said after Game 4. "I was just trying to finish my hit."

Game 4 may have been Giroux's final game of the 2012 season. The Flyers play tonight at the Wells Fargo Center and trail the Devils 3-1 in the best-of-seven series.

Hamels, of course, got himself into trouble after admitting he hit Harper on purpose. The pitcher wasn't available for comment yesterday.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Claude Giroux met with NHL disciplinarian Brendan Shanahan yesterday to discuss this check on Dainius Zubrus.

"If what he said is true, I'm kind of disappointed," Phillies GM Ruben Amaro, Jr. said. "Obviously, that's not what we're about. We're not about trying to injure people, if that's what people are thinking out there."

Hamels could have said that the pitch got away from him, but he uttered something surprising instead, the truth.

"He could have been a little more discreet about it," Phils skipper Charlie Manuel said. "He could have been a little less honest."

Hamels isn't appealing the suspension and began serving it immediately. The left-hander had been scheduled to pitch again Saturday, but the Phils most likely will give that start to Roy Halladay and push Hamels back to Sunday.

MIKE GREGER
mgreger@metro.us

New rivalry brewing in the NL East

Gutless. Classless. Chicken.

Those are the three words Washington GM Mike Rizzo was using to describe Cole Hamels after he plunked Bryce Harper.

"Cole Hamels says he's old-school?," Rizzo told The Washington Post. "He's the polar opposite of old-school. He's fake tough. He thinks he's going to intimidate us after hitting our 19-year-old rookie who's eight games into the big leagues? He doesn't know who he's dealing with."

The war of words may have launched a new rivalry in the NL East. The Phils have lacked a true rival in the division since those infamous Mets teams would front-run and then collapse down the stretch. The Phils and Nationals resume their season series May 21-23 at Citizens Bank Park.

"I think if we beat them on the field, that's going to take care of our business and that's how we settle it," Phils skipper Charlie Manuel said. METRO

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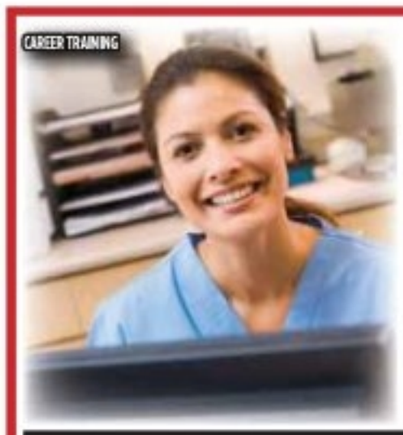

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Sixers look to close out Bulls, ready for hardest win in sports

Team can win first playoff series since 2003 tonight in Chicago Lead Bulls, 3-1 Noah likely out again

The Bulls are depleted, worn down and frustrated. That doesn't mean they'll go down without a fight.

Most of the Sixers' players don't know it, but finishing out a series on the road is a tall order. They've been to the playoffs in four of the last five seasons, but haven't won a series since 2003. Among rotation players, only Elton Brand was even in the NBA at that time.

"The close-out game is the hardest game to win in sports," coach Doug Collins said. "We've got to go into Chicago with the idea that we've got to try and get that win."

It's a hard game to win, but the top-seeded Bulls are also in a unique situation.

Joakim Noah (ankle) was limping badly while wearing a walking boot Sunday and is almost certainly out for Game 5. Derrick Rose (torn ACL) is done, Luol Deng has been locked down by Andre Iguodala and Richard Hamilton was benched in favor of Kyle Korver in the fourth quarter of Game 4. There are few reasons to think the Bulls can storm back and win three straight.

Sixers top assistant Michael Curry spoke to the team after Sunday's win, reminding them of the time his Pistons were down 3-1 to the Magic and came back to win. Consider it a warning.

"Next game, we have to play like it's Game 7," Jrue Holiday said. "Like our backs are against the wall, like it's do or die."

ON TV TONIGHT

Game 5: Sixers at Bulls, 9:30 (CSN)

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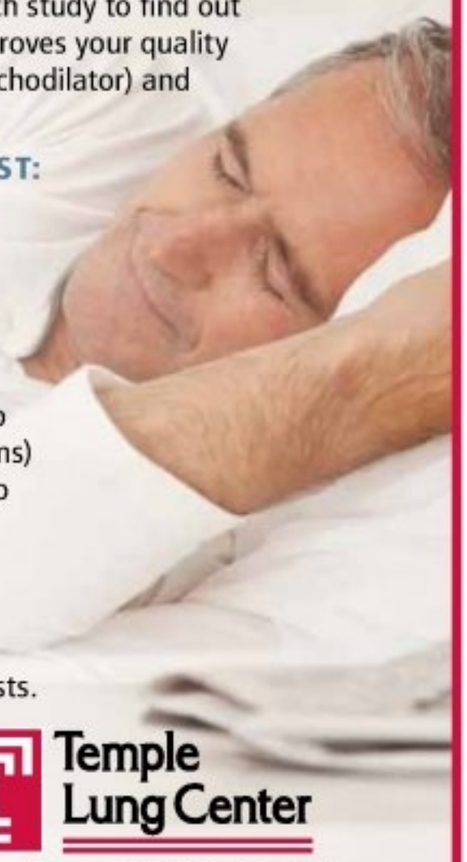

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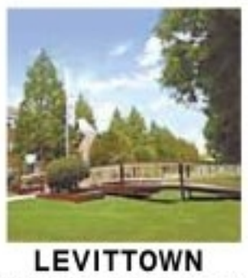

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